Amendments to the Claims.

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims.

Listing of Claims.

1.   (Currently Amended) A method of parametric group processing, comprising:

forming a parametric index from an indexed database, said parametric index using categorical attributes to reference a subset of elements where said categorical attributes are qualitative parameters;

specifying a first parametric group and a second parametric group corresponding to elements in said parametric index;

merging said first parametric group and said second parametric group to produce a merged parametric group; and

extracting a parametric result from said merged parametric group, wherein said parametric result specifies a set of documents.

2.   (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein specifying includes listing a parametric group.

3.   (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein specifying includes deriving a parametric group from text search results.

4.   (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein specifying includes mapping said text search results into said parametric index to identify a parametric group.

5.   (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein specifying includes assigning every element in a bucket array to distinct bucket set parents to produce a structured bucket array.

6.   (Original) The method of claim 5 further comprising taking the cross of all elements in said structured bucket array to produce a parametric group.

7.   (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said merging includes taking the union of said first parametric group and said second parametric group to produce said merged parametric group.

8.   (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein extracting includes collecting document identifications for said merged parametric group.

9.   (Original) The method of claim 8 further comprising forming the union of said document identifications to produce said parametric result.

10.   (Currently Amended) A method of parametric group processing, comprising:

performing a text search to produce text search results;

mapping said text search results into a parametric index to identify a first parametric group, said parametric index using categorical attributes to reference a subset of elements where said categorical attributes are qualitative parameters;

merging said first parametric group with a second parametric group to produce a merged parametric group; and

extracting a parametric result from said merged parametric group, wherein said parametric result specifies a set of documents.

11.   (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein said merging includes taking the union of said first parametric group and said second parametric group to produce said merged parametric group.

12.   (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein extracting includes collecting document identifications for said merged parametric group.

13.   (Original)   The method of claim 12 further comprising forming the union of said document identifications to produce said parametric result.

14.   (Currently Amended)   A computer readable medium, comprising:

a first set of instructions to specify a first parametric group and a second parametric group corresponding to elements in a parametric index, said parametric index using categorical attributes to reference at least one of said elements where said categorical attributes are qualitative parameters;

a second set of instructions to combine said first parametric group said second parametric group to produce a merged parametric group where said second set of instructions are independent of a query language; and

a third set of instructions to extract a parametric result from said merged parametric group, wherein said parametric result specifies a set of documents.

15.   (Original)   The computer readable medium of claim 14 wherein said first set of instructions facilitate the listing of said first parametric group and said second parametric group.

16.   (Original)   The computer readable medium of claim 14 including instructions to derive a parametric group from text search results.

17.   (Original)   The computer readable medium of claim 16 including instructions to map said text search results into said parametric index to identify a parametric group.

18.   (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 14 wherein said second set of instructions take the union of said first parametric group and said second parametric group to produce said merged parametric group.

19.   (Original)   The computer readable medium of claim 14 wherein said third set of instructions collect document identifications for said merged parametric group.

20. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 19 wherein said third set of instructions form a union between said document identifications to produce said parametric result.

21. (New) The method of claim 1 wherein merging further comprises performing a logical operation that is independent of a query language.

22. (New) The method of claim 10 wherein merging further comprises performing a logical operation that is independent of a query language.